

Ida.

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1857
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J D A.

σὺ δ' ἀθάνατος καὶ ἀγήρως,
'Αλλὰ καὶ ὥς ἐθέλω καὶ ἐέλδομαι ἡματα πάντα
Οἴκαδέ τ' ἐλθέμεναι, καὶ νόστιμον ἡμαρ ἰδέσθαι.
Ном.



PHILADELPHIA:
EDWARD S. MORRIS.

1857.

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To

M. L. W.

The Following Pages

Are Most Affectionately

Inscribed.

ὥς καὶ ἐγὼ τὴν
'Σκ θυμοῦ φίλεον.
Πομ.

PREFACE.

THE following Poem was commenced in the summer of 1847, and finished in the spring of 1850. It was originally undertaken at the suggestion of one whose purity of heart, intellectual attainments, and deep religious faith threw a sunset radiance over life's young hour. The author would pause a while from the cares and turmoil of the busy world, and offer a flower, warmed and nurtured into being by Love's earnest smile, to fill a place in that unfading garland, which the fond heart twines for the early dead.

Advertisement to the Second Edition.

THIS poem evinces, by its unpretending title, the author's design,—not to allure the uninitiated by a caption suggestive of romance and mystery, but to depend on the solid merits of the work itself to secure the approbation of persons of intelligence and cultivated taste. Such was the rapid sale of the first edition, and its favourable reception with the press and the reading public, that the issue of a second edition may be considered as a duty on the part of the publisher, who feels himself bound to comply with what appear to be the wishes of an appreciative public. Many typographical errors and other minor faults incidental to a first impression have been corrected in this edition; and the poem, having been carefully revised, may, as we hope, present still stronger claims to that general approbation which was elicited by its first appearance. In the style of the typography we have also made great improvements,—wishing to render it a perfect specimen of the art.

The authorship of "IDA" (a subject, by-the-way, which has occasioned a great deal of discussion) must still remain a secret. We are not permitted, at this time, to explain the author's reasons for withholding his name, and refusing to satisfy the earnest inquiries of a very large circle of admirers. The frequent repetition of the question "Who is the author of IDA?" is an evidence of the extensive popularity of the poem and its deeply-interesting character. It is very rarely, indeed, that an author is willing to forego, even for a time, such strong testimonials of public approval as have been bestowed upon "IDA." The Boston "Evening Transcript" (very high authority in such matters) considers this poem "worthy of the better days of English song;" and similar opinions have been expressed by some of the ablest critics in America. To editors and others who have noticed this work in a spirit of candor and liberality, and to those booksellers who have practically acknowledged the merits of "IDA" by sending in their orders, we return our hearty thanks, hoping to deserve a continuation of their kind offices.

BOOK I.

I D A.

A SUMMER'S morn, most beautiful and bright,
Diffuses joy o'er all that greets my sight :—
The smiling lawn, the graceful trees that wave,
The flowers that bloom, the banks which streamlets lave :
Unnumbered diamonds, sparkling in the grass,
Shine with new lustre as along we pass ;
Not Eastern tales have ever dared to tell
These mingled glories, that I love so well.
True Art may boast her priceless gems so rare,
But Nature can produce her stores more fair.

Each tiny flower that opes to greet the light,
Each beauty Nature gives to bless the sight,
Each blade of grass, aspiring to the sky,
The works of Art most proudly may defy.
The cold and speechless marble may proclaim
The deathless laurel of some deathless name ;
The simplest flower, that blooms on virgin sod,
An Artist shows, whom man adores as God.
The gorgeous glory of that King of old,
Whose palace walls and roofs were shining gold,
Whose Temple reared its lofty, dizzy height,
A world of splendour, dazzling to the sight,
Was not so rich, with all its beauty rare,
As modest lily, in the vale so fair.
The lofty mountains and the azure sky,
The rolling streams, that gaily hasten by,
The fields, the woods, the birds that warble here
Sweet music, ever grateful to my ear,

I bid ye hail : my pulses wildly beat,
While thus I muse on Nature's calm retreat.

“Saddle White Surry for the field,” he cried,
Whose kingdom could not purchase horse to ride ;
“Bring here my iron grey, for virtues rare,
My horse, the noblest of creation fair,
Save man, whose features God himself declare.
My iron grey, whose courage never quailed
In battle's shock, whose spirits never failed,
I long to mount thee once again this morn
To go my way, with thee not all forlorn.
And thou, my dog, of all the world so true,
When fortune frowns, and trusty friends are few ;
I've seen thee bounding o'er the lawn to meet
Thy master, as afar thou heard'st his feet.
I know thy worth, for oft in danger's hour,
I've felt thy love so true, so strong thy power.

Should I in dark ravine be lost to view,
Thy heart will then be fondest and most true ;
No love to thee will e'er be thrown away,
Thou'lt watch me truly till my dying day.
And though the Indian, in his darkened mind,
His dog in hunting-grounds may hope to find,
And feel that there the same true love will glow,
Which brightened earth, and lustre shed below,
Such faith I cannot fathom, nor explain ;
What now is dark, in future will be plain.
The friends, on whom I've lavished all my wealth,
Whose life to bless, I've spared nor peace, nor health,
Whose honour ever to my soul was dear,
Whose greatest faults I've virtues made appear,
To whom I've given my all of feeling deep,
The depths of heart, whose fountains never sleep,—
These may forsake, the changing world combine,
I know thy love, and thou hast tested mine.

Come, then, the busy world we'll leave to-day,
And through gay nature stroll our leisure way,
And when the sun his journey shall give o'er,
We'll rest where heavenly kindness shows us store.

There's music in the rippling stream, that flows
Along the banks, where graceful herbage grows ;
There's music in the waving boughs so fair,
There's music always sounding through the air ;
Eolian strains are wafted through the trees,
And magic music floats on every breeze.
There's music in the thunder-peal from far,
When nature seems convulsed by angry war ;
In the wild torrent, as it roars along,—
The world is filled with beauty and with song.
To feel this music and its influence own,
To feel a thrilling joy in every tone,
The heart must be to nature closely twined,
And nature with the heart sweet converse find.

In vain a tyrant hears a sacred song,
Which freemen pour, in burning words, along ;
No chord responsive gives a quick reply,
No heart, like his, beats quick, with pulses high.
The stately oak is riven by furious storm,
And cumbers earth with shattered, prostrate form ;
The humble shrub, that grows beside the oak,
Bends calmly to the storm, and ne'er is broke ;
And when the whirlwind's fury passes by,
The shrub shoots proudly upward to the sky.
'Tis ever thus with those, who yield to fate,
And calmly view the scenes of mortal state.
The man of passion braves the coming strife,
And vainly thinks his passions aid his life ;
The mild and gentle spirit yields the while,
Till tempests pass along, and sunshines smile.
Any dull weed may float *adown* the tide,
But noble natures *up* the current ride ;

He wisest is, and noblest in his span,
Who earns his fame by doing good to man.
Our life is useless and our labours vain,
If we have never soothed the child of pain;
If we have never shed a light to cheer
The lonely home, nor dried the bitter tear;
Nor whispered comfort to some aching breast,
Whose days bring sorrow, and the night no rest."

To musings such as these my thoughts were lent,
As now through nature's shades my way was bent.
'Tis sweet to leave the busy haunts of men,
And rove through shady grove and quiet glen;
Nature is always fair to him who sees

"With the eye, which feeling" fondly "gave,"
"For him there's a story in every breeze,
A whisper in ev'ry" sparkling "wave."
I rode along, thus lost, in musing mood,
No being meeting in the solitude.

A deep-toned bark from ever-watchful Gay
Proclaimed a friend, or foe, before my way ;
My horse, in spirit, seemed to wake to life,
To quiet be, or ready for a strife.
Before me rode at leisure pace, the while,
A stranger,—he my pathway would beguile,—
Of pleasing face and form, which claim the eye,
Such face no one would idly saunter by.
Care had left its cold and deepening trace
Upon his once most proud and beauteous face.
And now a sadness seemed to hover there,
But did not hide, what once was nobly fair.
A forehead high his intellect proclaimed,
An eye, where flashing brightness richly flamed ;
A pallid look o'erspread his visage, too,
And first, a sickly object met the view ;
But keen and earnest gaze, at once, would scan,
That sorrow made the seeming sickly man.

His dress was black, which quickly showed to view
A man of neatness and refinement true.
His horse was black, and seemed a fitting mate
For him who lonely rode at leisure gait.
Should I intrude, if once I dared to pay
A cordial greeting, on so bright a day?
Oh, no! I longed to hear his voice declare
The mingled glories of a morn so fair;
I longed, in nature's solitude, to find
A heart responsive, and a kindred mind.

He saw my feeling deepening in my face,
As nearer came my horse with measured pace,
And, waiting not for me to courage take,
He thus, at once, the awkward silence brake.
"I, then, am not the only one who pays
To nature worship, and to beauty praise;
This lovely morn has tempted you to ride
On idle pleasure, where your fancies guide?

'Tis well! improve the morn of life so bright,
'Tis all of life that wears a cloudless light."

Such words, in music, fell upon my ear,
And roused, at once, a sad, foreboding fear.
Why thus, when song and beauty filled the air,
And lovely glories sparkled everywhere,
Why thus could man, amid such scenes, presume
To utter words which showed such deepening gloom?
His voice was richness, but the words were sad,
And why this gloom, when all the world seemed glad?
Without delay his greeting I returned,
While curious thoughts within my bosom burned.
With earnest gaze I met his piercing eye,
And, more than half afraid, made this reply:—

“You rightly speak, my friend, for I now claim
The title of a *friend*—a magic name.

The truth you speak, that I, thus tempted, ride
On idle pleasure, where my fancies guide.
You wrong the world, yourself, and all mankind,
If you no pleasure but in youth can find.
Some heartless, heartfelt wrong hath surely driven
The iron deep, and all your prospects riven.
Some friend, to whom you gave a boundless heart,
Hath cast, with wingéd speed, a poisoned dart ;
Perhaps thy wealth, the fruit of labours done,
Hath passed away, like dew at morning's sun ;
Perhaps, in youth, when all the thoughts arise,
Like grateful incense, to the azure skies,
A fond and trusting heart thou gav'st to one,
Who broke her vows as soon as they were won ;
Or she, perchance, thy love refused with scorn ;
Such things as these might make thee sad, this morn."

We often speak a word, without control,
That rouses floods of anguish in the soul.

I, who would ne'er the simplest creature pain,
That walks the earth, or swims the boundless main,
Without the least intent had waked to life
A world of sorrow, and an angry strife.
He raised his eyes, now filled with liquid light,
A paler hue came deepening o'er my sight ;
A scornful smile played o'er his pallid face,
But quickly left, and deeper gloom took place.

“Young man,” said he, “I will not now conceal
The anguish, which my tell-tale looks reveal ;
I feel in kindness thou hast dealt the blow,
In kindness all my feelings to thee flow ;
Go on thy way ! thank God for all thy bliss,
And pray that thou may'st never feel like this ;
Thy youth will guard thee, and thy heart, I know,
Is filled with truth, and love's divinest glow.
Farewell ! let not my seeming sorrow dare
To cloud a morn, to thee, serenely fair.”

What had I done, and what had I to say,
To break the cloud that now o'erspread our way?
I could not rest, and know that I had given
A word which pained, and still be unforgiven.

“My friend, if ever innocence and truth
Were deeply graven on the heart of youth,
If word of mine, as sacred as my life,
Hath waked to being this o'erwhelming strife,
Forgive the indiscretion of my mind,
And let me, now, a full forgiveness find;
And though for pleasure I set out this morn,
I quickly will pursue my way, forlorn.”

“Thou wast forgiven ere thou sought'st the boon;
Thou mean'st no wrong; I cannot grant too soon.
The noble heart will ever seek to know
The moving thoughts from whence our actions flow;

An act from good intent will pardon find
In every noble heart and generous mind.
Thy earnest look and truthful eye declare
A heart and soul alive to goodness, rare ;
I'd trust thee with my life ; and here, to-day,
While zephyrs all around us gently play,
I'll tell a tale, which, though it sadness give,
Will show how sad it is for me to live ;
And when my tale is done, thou'lt never dare
To ask why youth alone is all too fair."

Our steeds are left to feed among the flowers,
While we beneath the sylvan, shady bowers
Reclined ; and, pausing but a moment long,
My friend commenced his tale of woe and wrong.

BOOK II.

I D A.

THE fond and trusting heart is ever prone
To feel the joys and sorrows not its own ;
We give our sympathy with lavish store
In just proportion as we've felt before.
He, too, who never felt the slightest woe,
May *truly* show how strong his feelings flow.
The heart, by nature, may be taught to feel,
And show a depth of grief, which some conceal ;
A heart, whose finest feelings always glow
To hear of joys, will weep to hear of woe.
Some show their grief by outward tears and moans,
And some can scarce refrain from bitter groans ;

Some, too, as keenly feel, yet ne'er betray
An act, to change the current of their way.

The stoic pride was never meant for man,
And *demons* boast the strength which stoics can.
To know a loss and truly feel it, too,
Requires a strength that stoics never knew.
A noble spirit never need to fear
His virtue less, through shedding noble tear :
Tears are the messengers which come to show
A heart where lively fountains ever flow.
But why thus muse? Time hastens on his way,
And I thus linger ; why this dull delay ?
At once I'll summon to my aid my power,
Nor longer waste, but seize the present hour ;
And if a tear should glisten in my eye,
Read there what depths of lively feeling lie
Down deep within my very inmost soul,
Where worlds of love maintain supreme control.

A pious father and a mother rare
Led my young feet through youth, divinely fair ;
A curate, who could boast a small estate,
Enough to spare to beggars at the gate,
Enough to give to all a welcome cheer,
Whoe'er should come, from distance far or near ;
A scholar, taught to prize the living page,
The splendid trophies of the golden age ;
A man refined, and ever prone to view
A scholar's life the richest and most true ;
And, though a scholar, never did he cease
His Church to strengthen and its zeal increase.
A mother, blessed by learning and by grace,
Of pleasing form and sweetly beauteous face ;
Her kind and gentle nature always sought
To give relief, and kindness always taught ;
The pencil, too, was ever her delight,
And works of merit met the critic's sight :

Such were, in brief, the guides who early trained
A youth in whom the gentler virtues reigned.

My youth was sunshine and my days were bliss :
It makes me wild to scan a life like this.
I early burned with love for classic lore,
And stores of precious volumes pondered o'er.
The Roman story filled my youthful brain,—
I wept for Hector and great Ajax slain :
The blind old Bard, his tale of blood could charm,
I wished to shelter Troy from Grecian harm.
The gems of Sappho thrilled my warm young heart,—
What scholar hath not felt the Sapphic dart ?
I bowed at Grecian eloquence divine,
And saw rich splendour o'er the Roman shine :
In fragrant groves, whose branches seemed to wave,
And woo the air as foam-wreaths woo the wave,
I oft have wandered with a burning fire,
And soothed my restless heart with Virgil's lyre.

The flowery yoke of Horace freely gave
A tempting noose, and I a willing slave ;
But, most of all, with youthful zeal I knelt,
And fervent love for Grecian beauty felt ;
Art, glowing Art ! by great Apelles sought,
Art's greatest beauties Zeuxis proudly caught.
I dreamed of Gods,—the Grecian Gods of old ;
I dreamed of beauties, never known nor told.

The ancient world was not alone my joy,
The modern schools my earnest thoughts employ.
I hung with rapture on a Raphael's face,
And thought I'd kingdoms give such forms to trace.
And, Shakspeare, thou ! how oft I've bent the knee,
And poured the longings of my soul for thee.
I rode on scraph-wings sublime, and trod
With Milton's blindness up the throne of God ;
I wept at Tasso's love, and longed to see
The dungeon-bars fly out, the captive free !

And though by bars the body be confined,
No power on earth can chain the immortal mind :
Enough—my lot was cast, I chose to be
A slave to Art : my triumphs thou shalt see.

And here I'd gladly pause, nor farther go,
My heart's deep feelings, now, too wildly flow ;
But, no ! why tarry thus, and sadly think,
“The stream runs on,—why tarry on the brink?”

Who hath not loved in youth, that golden time,
When thought will soar on seraph-wings sublime ?
When the warm blood fills every purple vein,
And glowing feelings all their freedom gain !
No false allurements, then, can tempt the soul,
But love, without alloy, maintains control.
When the rude world, its cares and follies reign,
And seek an entrance there, but seek in vain,

The heart's deep fountains swell like ocean's tide,
As then the loved one nestles by our side ;
The heart beats, then, responsive to each tone,
And pulse with pulse seems mingled into one ;
The worlds of happiness that mirrored seem
In eyes as lustrous as that fabled stream,
Where deep beneath its surface, ever fair,
The azure skies so true reflected were,
That one might gaze and doubt, in gazing long,
To which the name of *sky* did most belong ;
The kiss returned before the parting lips could dare
To breathe devotion to the loved one there ;
The fond embrace, which seems to shield from harm
The loved one, twined by love's protecting arm ;
The long delay, that but a moment seems
To those who love, or like some fairy dreams,
When comes the hour that bids us leave the sight,
We linger, linger still to breathe *Good Night !*

Good Night! what worlds of prayer arise
In words like these, whose sweetness never dies.
Good Night! the sweetest accents we express,
When welling up from hearts of happiness.

In youth we trust, nor think the future e'er
Will break the spell which renders youth so fair.
In early youth improve its golden time
To love, if thou wouldst wish thy love sublime.
If no fond being answers to thy tone,
Hide deep thy earnest love, 'tis all thine own.
If Heaven in mercy give, thy life to share,
A fond, true heart, of heavenly graces rare,
Be lavish of thy love if thou wouldst know
The truest bliss that mortals feel below.
Thy love will wake to being and refine
The love which thou wouldst fondly claim as thine;
The heart exulting seeks a kindred flame,
Where truth prevails the two are both the same.

Cloud not the days that thus belong to youth
By verging e'er from confidence and truth ;
For love thus grafted knows no change by time,
But rises higher with the soul sublime.
The form may lose its strength, the world grow old,
The hearts united thus will ne'er grow cold.
The brilliant mind that lustre shed in youth,
And gave to love its gems of richest truth,
May wane, like evening moon at dawn of day,
But love will see its once transcendent ray.
In silvery age, when youth hath passed away,
Love brighter glows than in its early day.

I left my home, it matters not to say
The sorrows of that touching, parting day.
A blessing followed one who always strove
To win regard by filial acts of love.
The spot which I had chosen for my home
Was lovely as a field of flowers in bloom ;

Rich mansions decked the country all around,
In place like that no ill should e'er be found.
One man there was, whose mansion graced the place,
A man of wealth, but not of high-born race ;
His wife not fair, though haughty as a queen,
Such pride is seldom known and rarely seen.
Two daughters graced that proud and wealthy home,
The one too gentle for life's ills to come.
Her mild blue eyes, the index of a soul
Where pure and holy thoughts unceasing roll ;
Her name was **IDA**, matchless Grecian name,
That long had filled the world with classic fame ;
Fair to the sight as one would wish to see,
And oh ! divinely fair she seemed to me.
The sister queenly and of haughty mien,
But still the nobler virtues oft were seen
Beneath her soul, though seeming to express
No feeling but repulsive haughtiness,

There dwelt a love for her, the gentler one,
Whose virtues shone by acts of kindness done.
The father, once a man of tender heart,
But wealth had robbed him of his better part ;
His station high,—a station, not the free
And silent honour which we sometimes see ;
But such as wealth will always give to those
Who live and follow *fashion*, as it goes ;
Each taste was met, no pleasure was denied,
His idol *gold*, his ruling passion *pride*.
His daughters grew in beauty and in mind,
The one was like her mother, less refined ;
But Ida seemed to move upon the earth
As one of nobler, purer, finer birth.

To sketch the woods, to paint the landscape fair,
My steps oft led me on, unconscious where.
The father oft had met me on my way,
And always cordial greetings he would pay ;

He oft invited, pressed me hard to come
And seek retreat beneath his splendid home.
I gave consent, at last, to while away
With him, in pleasures new, a passing day.
His house was filled with works of art most rare,
With glowing pictures through the arches there ;
Here hung a Claude, and there a Rosa, too,
And here a Guido met the enraptured view ;
And precious books, such choicest gems to please,
Soon set a youthful heart, like mine, at ease.
The hours too swiftly thus will glide along,—
The hours beguiled by beauty, books, and song.

'Twas now I first saw Ida's charming face,
A being blessed with more than earthly grace.
Enough ! as time wore on I often came,
And there a constant guest I soon became.
It seemed as if design had laid a snare
To make the artist wait on Ida fair ;

To her I read, with her I lingered long,
With her I joined my voice in witching song.

One day we walked beside a streamlet fair,
Glad music seemed to fill the balmy air;
The rainbow bubbles sparkled on the stream,
And all the world seemed wrapt in fairy dream;
We sat beneath a tree, whose branches waved
And threw their shadows where the streamlet laved:
I long had wished such spot, such hour to know,
To tell fair Ida all my passion's glow;
I told her then, with earnest power, how long,
How deeply too, I loved, with feeling strong;
I gazed with eyes intent, in hope to find
A full response in heart, a kindred mind;
A brighter hue o'erspread her visage fair,
And rising beauties sweetly clustered there;
Her beating heart a conscious struggle showed,
And told a flame, that there with brightness glowed;—

She raised her eyes,—one look alone expressed
That I was *loved*, and all supremely blessed;
I clasped her to my heart with wild delight,
New visions broke upon my aching sight;
We wished no words to tell our perfect bliss,—
The heart's true language breathes in love's first kiss;
Expressive silence can alone reveal
All that the strong in sympathy thus feel.

I loved, and was beloved,—need I say more,
And tell the vows, the hopes, we whispered o'er;
The upward glance, the downward cast of eye,
The beating heart, the oft-repeated sigh?
If thou hast loved, thou'lt need no voice of mine
To tell a love, the same, perhaps, as thine.
I knew no joy I wished not she should share,
And she no pain which I'd not gladly bear.
Our hearts, responsive to a kindred tone,
Wished every heart as joyous as our own.

The father must, without delay, be told,—
That father, whose whole heart was set on gold,—
His home, his praise, had all met my command,
And now from him I'd claim his daughter's hand.
I told him all, without the slightest art,
And dreamed not that there beat so base a heart.
I've seen the sun in darkness pass away,
When clouds o'ercast a tranquil summer day;
A thunder-cloud which quickly fills the sky,
And angry winds, that rage in sweeping by,
Proclaim a tempest, mighty in its power,
To pour upon the world its threatening shower.
With angry passion stamped upon his face,
Wherein no kindly look the eye could trace,
With fury glancing from his proud, dark eye,
To me he made this scornful, quick reply:—

“How darest thou, beggar as thou art, presume
To love my child, and such a tone assume?

I know *her* well,—and she would scorn to hear
A word, in which but hints of love appear !
Where is thy wealth ? and where thy station,—fame ?
Say ! what hast thou above a beggar's name ?
I gave thee kindness, and thy churlish heart
O'erleaped thy station ! Hence ! be wise ! depart !”

Young as I was, and filled with love's bright fire,
I poured, without reserve, my raging ire ;
My heart was wild, my feelings madly high,
And thus to him, at once, I made reply :—

“Thy child, indeed, hath owned the generous flame
That long hath filled her heart and mine, the same.
Though not so rich as thou in wealth, I hate
The low but gilded trappings of thy state.
Though often urged, I lingered long before
I crossed the threshold of thy wealthy door ;

Thy home to me e'en now had been unknown,
Unless the first advances were thine own.
A '*beggar's*' name thy lips have dared to place,
The name of '*churl*' thou gavest to one, whose race,
For learning and for virtues ever rare,
Hath earned a title thou canst *never* share.
But know, I scorn thy meanness, and I say
Thy daughter's love for me will ne'er decay.
I'll leave thy roof,—but when, in future hour,
We meet again, we'll see the man of power."

I left the house, and saw beside the gate
My Ida; she had met the self-same fate.
Her weeping eyes and throbbing heart expressed
How keen the thoughts, which could not be suppressed.
This hour was precious, and I bade her say
If this should be the end of love's young day?
If all our hopes were o'er, our joys a dream,
And vows as fleeting as the shadows seem?

“Little thou knowest,” said she, “a woman’s heart,
If thou dost think from vows she’ll *thus* depart.
The ivy, that in sunshine clings around
The strengthening tree, in storms is closer bound.
I am thine own, through good, through ill, for aye,
With thee I’d live, without thee, lingering, die.
I feared the fate which wealth and fashion throw
Around fond hearts,—I keenly feel the blow.
Whate’er may hap, thy love will cheer my way,
I feel what I have not the power to say.”

I kissed her lips, and prayed that God would guide
The loved one, now thus clinging to my side.
An hour we spent, and words but feebly show
That hour of transport, and that hour of woe.
I could not urge a flower like her, so fair,
To fly with me, and tempt the ocean air;
Oh, no! true love no seas can e’er divide,—
Though long the time, true love will e’er abide.

We formed our plan ; at dawn of coming day
To distant lands I soon would speed my way ;
While she at home, in love's fond trust, would wait
The time, when we could baffle cruel fate.

With heavy hearts we took our way along,
The very birds seemed saddened in their song.
In quiet grove a quaint old church was seen,
Which reared its spire the leafy boughs between ;
We reached the altar, where, in ages past,
Rich offerings on its marble font were cast ;
We knelt, and breathing each a fervent prayer,
In tears baptized our love in silence there.
One kiss,—one long embrace,—and all was o'er ;
She sought her home, and *I* a foreign shore.
I draw the veil : for we alone could know
That parting hour,—that hour of keenest woe.

BOOK III.

I D A.

THE morrow came, and clouds o'ercast the day,
I reached a vessel moored within the bay ;
I gained the deck, and bade the stormy wind
Fill every sail, and leave the shore behind.
The word was given,—the canvass caught the breeze,
The gallant vessel proudly ploughed the seas ;
With eyes intent I watched the distant shore,
As fast the vessel made the distance more.
My sight grew dim, a speck appeared in view,
Where dwelt my Ida, and her father too.
Only the ocean now appeared around,
The sea was dark, the sky with tempests frowned ;

Its roar was music to my listening ear,—
For what had I from God's grand voice to fear?
Man, man alone, had met my love with scorn,
God never leaves his creatures all forlorn.
The dashing billows throw around me fast
Their briny surges, sweeping every mast;
And, wreathed in foam, the gallant vessel gave
A splendid trophy to the angry wave,—
But no! defiant of the storm she flew
To meet each crested wave that rose to view.
With rigging rent, and flapping sails, all torn,
She onward sped, and laughed the waves to scorn;
And as the bird, that hastes through air to fly,
Now downward goes, then proudly seeks the sky:
So now the bark, that bore me o'er the main,
Down deep was driven, then upward rose again,—
Fit emblem of our life, a type so true
Of joys and sorrows ever in our view.

We reached the shore, and many friends were here
To grasp the hand and shed the joyous tear,
To welcome back the wanderers to their home,
And, loving, keep them from the thirst to roam.
I trod the shore,—a foreign shore trod I,—
'Twas sad to meet no friend nor kind reply;
The world seemed dark, and human feelings cold,
Lie still, my heart, thy aim is *fame* and *gold*;
A *fame*, to throw a wreath o'er Ida dear,
And *gold* to bribe her father's *gilded* ear.
But why despair? Had I not learning, health,
Those splendid signs presaging fame and wealth?
Then burn my heart with love's pure, holy fire,
My fame shall wake the Poet's sweetest lyre;
The world shall wonder, and the Artist's name
Shall sparkle high upon the scroll of fame.

The time rolled on,—I will not pause to tell
The changing fortunes which my lot befell.

One man my rising genius quickly knew,
And brought my talents to the public view.
That face, by labour long to beauty wrought,
At once he saw, admired, and quickly bought.
He bought *that face*, and now the tale is told,
I gained the paltry trash, a sum of *gold*.
Thou gold ! that gilds the lonely way through life,
The parent, too, of misery and strife !
Where one with purest joys is brightly crowned,
Ten thousand hearts with keenest woes are bound.
Gold ! magic gold ! thy power, how soon 'tis felt !
The men who spurned me, now in homage knelt,
Now saw my genius, praised my brilliant wit ;
They call me "*friend*," and at my table sit ;
They drink my choicest wines, they sound my fame,
They bask beneath the Artist's splendid name.

How I became renowned and wealthy too,
I'll tell in brief and hasty words to you.

The man who first my magic picture bought,
Came oft to view, and oft my studio sought;
A man of learning, but eccentric ways,
No voice but mine would ever sound his praise.
A *beggar*, too, to all he seemed to be,—
How dear that name had now become to me !
He loved me as his child, and I became
Through him, I knew not how, a child of fame.
But soon the heavy hand of sickness brought
Him low, and I the beggar's dwelling sought ;
I cheered his hours, I held his aching head,
I soothed his pains, to him the Bible read.
His hour was come,—I knew that hour was nigh,—
I strove to keep from him that he must die ;
He knew it, and with feeble voice thus said,
As I supported, then, his throbbing head :—
“ My son, this *Casket* take, and when I die
Let me be placed afar from mortal eye ;

The world hath wronged me, but I die content ;
This *casket* take, a gift for kindness sent ;
But not till I am gone its treasure ope,
'Twill damp perhaps, it may surpass, thy hope.
I know thy wrongs, I prize thy kindness true ;"
(To him I once had told my story through.)
"Farewell ! thy kindness in my latest hour
Hath made thee great : use well thy future power."

He died. I wept beside his cold remains,
I long had shared his joys and soothed his pains.
I sought a place, afar from curious eye,
Where willow-trees in solemn music sigh.
I laid him there, without a single one
To mark the spot, or know what I had done.
I raised a stone of neat and modest pian,
And carved these words :—" *Here lies an honest man.*"

This trial o'er, my lonely way I sought
To my sad home, my heart with sorrow fraught;
I oped the *casket*, hoping there to find
The life of one, to me so nobly kind.
I found it,—read it o'er and o'er again,
Until my very soul was wrung with pain.
Beneath a lid, which seemed concealed from sight,
There lay a parchment and a signet bright;
“My Last Will!” these few words were written there,
In letters clear and broad and roundly fair.
How strange! I knew not what to think or say,—
What could a *beggar* have to give away?
I read the page with wonder and surprise,
I scarce could trust my own deceptive eyes;
A *beggar*! No! a man of fortune rare!
And I, the “*churl*,” was now the “*beggar's*” heir.

Thoughts of the past along my senses roll,
Wealth, fame, and power within my own control!

These, these, dear Ida, now are all thine own,
I would not change my lot for kingly throne.
My wealth, my fame, were brilliant now to scan;
With such, who could not be a happy man?
Oh, no! my heart's deep current sought to find
A something wanting,—'twas a kindred mind.
That mind was far beyond the ocean's tide,
My all I'd give to be by Ida's side,
To hear her voice, to see her mild blue eye,
And cruel fate most proudly to defy.

The rich and great were now my constant *friends*,—
They gave the smile that *often* wealth attends;
They flattered, sent to know if I'd approve
This dress, that book, this man; and, seeming, strove
To gain by *fawning* what they ought by *love*.
Fools that they were! as if such arts could gain
The human heart, and all its strength retain!

I gave them kindness, but I gave no more,
If fortune frowned, their love *might* soon be o'er.
I sought the poor and lowly sons of earth,
And scattered roses where but thorns had birth;
And prayers, which rose to bless the artist's name,
Were jewels rich, to gild my brilliant fame.
I trod the shores which classic tales have told,
I saw the spots renowned by deeds of old;
Upon the burning waste of Afric's sand—
A scorching, blasting, God-accursed land—
I wandered, like an Arab, wild and free,
And longed new scenes, new men, new forms to see.
From Arab chief I bought, for Ida fair,
The noble steed, that now is grazing there.

Time came when I could now my wealth command,
And light of heart I sought my native land;
But, though the gallant vessel flew like wind,
And left old scenes and classic shores behind,

My panting heart so burned to haste the day
When I at Ida's feet might proudly lay
My laurels won, and deep devotion pay,
That, though the vessel gaily dashed the spray,
I chid the winds, "which loitered on their way."

I reached the shore, my own dear, native shore,
My heart beat wilder now than e'er before.
I sought the country where my Ida dwelt,
But words will fail to tell thee all I felt.
The trees were there, but they had larger grown,—
Those selfsame trees that *we* had called our own;
The mansions round had felt the marks of age,
Time's silent waste, the tempest's furious rage;
And birds were there among the forest grove,
But not the same that warbled sweetest love;
The quaint old church alone had not decayed,
The thick-set boughs its antique spires betrayed.

I crossed its threshold, gazed on every part,
No sound was heard except my beating heart ;
The aisles the sound prolonged, and hastening there,
Where stood the selfsame font, I knelt in prayer.
'Twas here, in years gone by, that Ida dear
With me had knelt, and vowed devotion here.
Had rolling time, whose changes met my view,
Produced a kindred change in Ida, too ?

There stood her home, and there the garden-gate,
There grew the flowers,—why longer lingering wait ?
Onward I walked, I now approached the door,
The threshold, where I oft had trod before ;
I summons gave, and soon there came to view
The selfsame servant, whom I quickly knew.
She knew me not,—the burning Afric sun
Had changed my face, and time had wonders done.
“And where is Ida? say, oh, where is she !
My Ida now I quickly wish to see.”

My voice at once was known, but still she gazed
In silence lost, bewildered, and amazed.

“And where is Ida?” scarce could I exclaim,
Or speak, or breathe, to me so loved a name,
When, faintly sighing, came a voice along,—

I oft had heard that voice in sweetest song,—
I tarried not to waste, in idle show,

A moment more,—my feelings overflow;

I rushed to where I heard the feeble sound,
And there on languid couch my Ida found.

I clasped her to my heart, I held her there,
Oh, God! how pale, yet still divinely fair!

“I thank thee, Father,” thus her prayer begun,
“That I am spared to see this triumph won.

Oh, why,” she said, “thus linger long away,
And leave me mourning till my dying day?”

I placed her form upon the couch, so low,—

My tears were tears of joy, and tears of woe:

Of *joy*, to clasp once more my Ida dear,
Of *woe*, to find her lingering, dying here.

I kissed her lips, her wan and pallid cheek,
My heart was full,—I could not, dared not, speak.
I saw it all, nor need I seek to know
The cause of this sad change of bitter woe.
Her father, mother, sister, all had said
That *man* was always false,—that I was dead.
They urged her from among the gay and proud
To take a suitor from the wealthy crowd.
They hid the letters which I sent to cheer
Her lonely hours, and dry the falling tear.
They *hid* them,—never breathed to her my name,
Nor told her where, nor when, nor how they came.
Fiends that they were! to blight a fair young flower,
And crush to earth a bud in love's young hour.
Fools that they were! the more they fiercely strove
To make her hate, the more intense her love;

And as a flower, in all its beauty rare
By thoughtless step destroyed, perfumes the air,
So Ida's love, though crushed, still stronger grew,
By sorrow nurtured and ennobled too.

It might not be too late (such hope would cheer)
This flower again to life and joy to rear.
Vain hope! alas, how vain! I knew too well
Her fate,—the fate I would not Ida tell.
I soothed her hours: she often seemed to wake
To strength, and I at times would courage take.
I talked of love, of hope, of all to please,
And make her heart and mine at present ease.
She sighed, if e'er I left her couch to go
And hide the tears, which often freely flow.

At last a transient gleam of hope came near
To bless my sight,—'twas only transient fear.

I raised her up, I twined my arm around
Her form, my heart a resting-place she found.
She sweetly smiled; I kissed her pale, fair brow,
She whispered gently low, "I'm happy now!
Thy love repays for all my hours of pain.
Farewell! my love! farewell! We'll meet again!"
She raised her eyes, she pressed her lips to mine,
Her face was radiant as a face divine;
She closer clung, I strove my tears to hide,
She whispered "*Love!*"—'twas o'er, and thus she died!
Died ere her prime, in youth and beauty's bloom,
Died like a flower that fades in smiling June;
Died like a zephyr, borne along the air;
She died in beauty,—all divinely fair!

They laid her in a quiet, calm retreat,
In spot most lovely and at hour most meet.
'Twas evening, and the stars looked kindly down
To welcome one of their choice spirits home;

The stars smiled there, upon that virgin sod,
The stars,—those bright Forget-me-nots of God.
Three *seeming* mourners followed then the bier,
The fourth, a mourner *true*, a stranger there ;
The three departed, and the stranger knelt
Beside the grave, and keenest anguish felt.
Some flowers were planted by the stranger's hand,
He left the place, and sought another land.

“My friend, I feel the tale you thus relate ;
But what became of those, and what their fate,
Who thus unkindly, and with fiendish part,
Opposed true love, and broke a daughter's heart?”

“If thou canst hear,” said he, “I'll quickly tell
The woes, the loss, that soon these fiends befell.
Their wealth by righteous law soon passed away,
The law of recompense for wrongs to pay.

The father's ships, with all their princely gain,
By furious storms were sunk beneath the main ;
And nought was found to tell the tale of woe,
But all were lost in ocean's depths below.
His stately mansion, filled with works of art,
By fire was burned, consumed in every part ;
His growing crops, that waved in beauty fair,
Were blighted by a damp, malignant air ;
And they, though wealthy and so proud before,
Were *beggars* now, and all their triumphs o'er.
His broad ancestral lands were quickly sold,
And all were purchased by a stranger's gold.
The *friends*, who waited on the rich, proud man,
And fawned and flattered all that such men can,
They vanished, like the morning dew, away,
Nor came to soothe, nor parting visit pay.
But *one* alone of all the world, still true
To kindness, paid a parting visit, too ;

A stranger came to cheer, they knew not who,
And gave relief in time of need, most true.
The stranger's gold a fair retreat obtained,—
The stranger's gold the once proud *three* maintained.
Draw near to me,—I'll whisper in thine ear
A name, that ne'er the sounding breeze shall hear.

* * * * *

That stranger's name, nor home, *they* never knew,
They never will,—I've told the name to you.
If thou wilt go with me, I'll show to-day
Where Ida sleeps, where I my worship pay.
My tale is done,—my life is waning fast;
Be not disturbed, release will come at last."

He led me through the long, thick pathways, then,
And through the shady grove and silent glen;
A splendid marble shrine was shining there,
Amid luxuriant foliage, rich and rare;

Upon its graceful top an urn was found,
And classic beauty beamed from all around;
A gem of purest art that shrine was made,
And here, in life's last sleep, was Ida laid.
One word, alone, was seen to meet the view,
That word was ~~IDA~~, fondest and most true.
"A stranger's gold had bought her home and land;
A stranger's power had Ida at command;
An Artist's love had reared this classic shrine,—
That Artist's hand is fondly grasping thine;
I am that stranger, and that 'beggar,' too,—
A beggar now, by every name so true."

"One thing alone remains for me to do,
To show my deep regard, my friend, for you."
With that he led me through the grove, and there
A villa met my view,—'twas quaintly rare.
We went beneath the trees, we oped the door,
And trod upon the polished marble floor.

The rooms were filled with costly works of art,
And all declared the scholar's mind and heart.
This was the stranger's home,—so rich, so fair,—
The mingled beauties of the world were there.
Opening a *casket*, he displayed to view
A gem, as brilliant as the sight e'er knew;
Bright diamonds sparkled in the circle round,
And topaz, ruby, sapphire, there were found.
Within this bed of dazzling gems was seen
A face of loveliness,—'twas Love's own Queen!
A mild blue eye, and features sweetly fair,—
A holy smile seemed playing calmly there.
And this was IDA,—charming to behold!
His tale is done; his wrongs are fully told.
He waits on earth with faith's bright star to cheer,
His hope as buoyant as his soul sincere;
And, though bright jewels sparkle by the way,
His love for Ida shines with purest ray.

LOVE is the spirit that pervades the earth;
Love is the star that shone upon our birth;
Love guides our youth, refines our manhood too,
Protects our age, and keeps our goal in view;
Love watches while the sparks of life expire,
And showeth, then, its fondest, purest fire;
Love follows, with desponding heart, the bier;
Love bears, with fortitude, all trials here;
Love soars beyond the tomb to realms above,
And finds its home in GOD, the source of **LOVE**.

[Dec 19, 1857.]

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